M 1022

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[redacted]
Must Remain in
Transcription Room

Well, it is good to see some of you again after being away for a little. It can happen again you know. So now what will we talk about tonight?

Q: Would you talk about the myth of the so-called perfect man, that is, Meher Baba speaks of there always having to be a certain number of perfect men in the world. I think he may say 38, I'm not sure. I think Jewish tradition speaks of the same thing, and Tom Harris mentioned a legend in Hinduism in which?, I believe he said it was Shiva who from time to time opens his third eye and looks around and sees enough conscious men in the world and decides not to destroy it and goes back to sleep. Is this similar to Gurdjieff's notion that there must be a certain amount of consciousness to help maintain and expand the universe.

A: You can look at it different ways. I think there is one particular viewpoint that we would like to believe it because when they say it is possible for some one else, maybe it is possible for them. In order that there is some kind of assurance that as far as earth is concerned it is not completely impossible to become conscious or to become a perfect man. I think there is also a certain desire on the part of people to try to visualize what could be an ideal, secretly hoping that(that)if they get in contact with it or if they could search for it that when they do meet it it might drop off on themselves. I think from the general standpoint the maintenance of certain things as a condition on earth, a particular place where earth is, there has to be a variety of different possibilities, of different forms of level and life even on earth itself. Because if it is in contact with that where it came from

at the planetary level and if it is kept in balance that is cosmologically speaking, in going towards the moon as represented by the cosmic ray which is of course a perfectly reasonable and legitimate idea to assume, that that exists. Then it must be necessary that on earth there are different types certain belonging to that which grows up, evolutionaryily and also others that go down, involutionarily. So I think from that standpoint it is necessary if you want to look at earth as a unit that there have to be a variety of different people who are on earth in equilibrium among themselves and then would create for mankind a certain possibility of an equilibrium among themselves as then represented by different types. Now how much good it does or rather even as a legend has a particular meaning in itself, that is if you take it now out of the mythical possibilities of something that applies to a certain thing that is surely larger and that may have a different kind of consciousness from what we have, that the fact that we want to believe in it or that it satisfies a certain reasonable thought of thinking that the universe is made up more or less logically and that the different manifestations of man represent in the last instance the possibility of manifestations of one individual. Then of course you have to look also in yourself as a possibility of a mixture of different tendencies, some which would go towards the evolution and some towards the involution of man, and I think that whatever may be true as a whole, as a legend that has existed for ages and ages and is still believed in, probably came from the development of certain people who found in themselves these kind of tendencies and then started to explain for themselves

of belonging to a part of some ( ) larger and the whole question so above, so below. Now, to what extent it is true for certain individuals to have within them all the possibilities of that which you might then call a positive sign, that is that which is positive is now in the direction of evolution and what is negative would be in the direction of involution, that then in man at certain times in his development or at certain times whenever he considers himself, he is a mixture of all the different tendencies put together. That is not that that becomes immediately manifest in any form of manifestation at that moment but it is of course true that whatever he manifests now he may not manifest tomorrow, and although man is limited to a certain type that he has many possibilities within that type to manifest and in that sense there are also tendencies and sometimes manifestations which become apparent they could belong to a more perfect man and reversely then what he sometimes might appear to bemaybe, let's call it criminal, if you want to use that word as an extreme form of negativity. So I think it has to be done or looked at from a standard of man that he is most satisfied for himself with the assumption that such a condition can exist in a larger degree outside of himself simply because he finds in himself such possibilities to which he then at certain times can strive. Now if you look at the different units of humanity as a whole you will find that at any time that anyone considers a large enough quantity that all the possibilities of manifestations of men are being lived at a certain time regardless where they may be at a certain moment all such possibilities which are possible to man as a whole are being lived at the present time

That of course is not only true when you know about it but it must be true as an assumption that the totality of all living matter as represented by mankind represents this totality of the body of mankind in which each cell has a certain function. So I think there is nothing against the myth, only it may not always be practical and it may not be of very much use unless you can translate it as a myth for yourself in which you have certain realization of certain things within yourself existing.

Q: Mr. Nyland, does this suggest that each man as a micro-universe must have within himself a portion of himself conscious, or perfect, or perfected to maintain or expand his -

A: This is true, I think that the man has at certain times absolutely beautiful and pure moments of a great deal of sacredness for himself and I think that at other times, sometimes maybe forced by conditions, he also realizes that he is subject to certain I'll call them, negative laws and that in retrospect seeing himself manifesting in a different way and again I leave out what may be the cause but at certain times he knows he is this and at other times he knows he is something else and that these kind of tendencies in man, partly represented perhaps in his brain, partly in what he feels, nevertheless his manifestation is sometimes extremely kind and sometimes extremely cruel. You see I think it is a question of satisfying for oneself that that what one discovers within oneself is not unreasonable, and as soon as you want to live with certain things that are your own and you cannot explain you will always find a certain satisfaction when you could explain it by the fact that it also exists somewhere else or that the same

kind of proportion exists in a different kind of a level. You know how it is if you have done something wrong and you find someone else who has done the same thing wrong you are almost happy. It has to do with manifestations of man as a whole and if you take that on the scale to totality of mankind that all possibilities of man are being lived at any one time you can even go so far as saying thank God someone else is living my possibility. Because if he didn't do it then I might have to. It is a logical assumption and I think it is quite reasonable theory to live by. If there are 33 or perhaps only 3, it all depends how one wants to simplifiy it. I think as far as Gurdjieff is concerned there are 3. If they are still living that is another question.

Q: I have a question, is there something you could tell us about your trip that could benefit us.

A: Marcus, the trip is Work, Work, Work, and that would benefit you. It is to a certain extent a benefit to me or rather an interesting fact that whenever I travel here or there you always discover people who are interested in some form of objectivety or perhaps who are looking for something and in which this particular desire is not as yet atrophied. I think it becomes very valuable to see that the desire for trying to find oneself or to try to gather knowledge and understanding of oneself and to definitize for oneself a certain aim that one has in life as that is not dependent on any particular place on earth or it is not dependent on a particular condition of development of man. But that it must be inherent in each person in whom there

is still some form of life as remnant and perhaps ~~bottled~~ covered up but at certain times comes out in the open and is then expressed in the desire to really want to find out why he exists. And whenever that is found there is something of a comradeship between those people who are also on the same kind of a road and then immediately if that is the truth, that is if one is convinced of the sincerety of that which leads very often to the possibility of an exchange and it is a happy exchange when there is in such communication a certain common ground of understanding. So in general I would say when one goes to Santa Fe or the coast Berkeley or Seattle or where ever I stopped at the time that there are there also people who are interested in ideas as a whole, I don't want to say immediately Gurdjieff, but that there are people in general in existence who are not entirely satisfied by living on the surface of life. And whenever that happens and how deep it goes I don't know but surely it is a little bit deeper than the periphery, that there is an essential quality in them, and that there is a possibility of for themselves even distinquishing between an outer life manifestation and an inner life existence and that there is to a certain extent a possibility of finding words, certain concepts which are similar and on which basis then one can have an agreement. Whenever there is that kind of possibility so that one can spend the time usefully in talking about it and perhaps in such a form of communication can exchange ideas which can be understood by each other, it enhances particular feeling of the value and the worthiness of one's own life for that particular

purpose.

Q: Well what happens if one sets forth on a journey and runs across these people who are dissatisfied with the surface of life and one has intuitive feeling towards them and has an intuitive understanding but there is no form of expression, they can't make it, what happens?

A: Well, there are so many different kinds of people, dependent entirely on what they say and what they really mean. There are many people who are so used to use words, and who claim that they feel certain things and if you only listen to their words and you don't listen well enough you start to believe them. When it comes to proving that there is something beyond or behind the words and that they would be willing, let's say, to fight for that kind of a question, 'I want to find out why I am alive and so forth,' if that has a real meaning for them what are they then willing to give up in order to get that kind of a knowledge and even if it is knowledge in the beginning it may not be digestible but at least it might satisfy their intellect, it might satisfy their logic or their particular feeling condition. But you see it is still a far cry from people that say they want as against those that could actually prove that they want. There is a tremendous gap.

Q: How does one - you are a different man than I am, if I am a man at all, I don't know, you have answers to certain questions If I should go on a journey and I should meet a man and he should say I am dissatisfied with life can you help me, I could not help that man because I myself am looking for help so what does one do in such a situation?

A: Well, you keep on looking for help then. How else would it be? Until one comes to a certain point where you find that you may be able to be of help to someone else. You'll only find out by practise though sometimes you get hurt, sometimes you hit your head against the wall, I think there are in certain people certain types without any question a desire that they want to help others and that they start to wish to help and their intention is quite right. The question is have they enough equipment, in the first place can they understand in what condition the other person is who wants to be helped or rather who they think ought to be helped. The second is do they know if that person actually wants help. In the third place, can they give help that would be adaptable to the other and desirable from their standpoint. And the fourth is how can they approach it by means of certain formulations or attitude so that then at that moment becomes desirable. I think that these are four points that one must really keep in mind and it is not that easy to say here I know this and that and I'm convinced that it is the truth and so forth now I go out an preach the gospel to the heathens. I think there are many people who go around ~~helping~~ having the idea that they can teach and they make it much worse. If they are honest they will find out that they can not and probably if they have enough integrity then they will say it is not as yet and perhaps I will have to wait a little bit. But I don't think you will find out until sometimes you try, now in order to be successful in any kind of a trial you take someone where you are absolutely sure that they are at a much lower level of development than you are. Now it all depends, if you looking around and with your own

attitude towards yourself of knowing what you are and let's say you might have an inferiority complex, that you consider yourself much smaller even than someone else, it would be extremely difficult to find someone who is inferior to you, so the search will end up that you never will find anyone for you will never have the courage. So it starts of course with whatever one considers for oneself to be, and if I feel that there are certain things based on my experience through which I've gone or rather what my life has become and has been in the past and out of that I have drawn certain conclusions I still have to make up my mind that the conclusions I have come to are of use to someone else. Now if I acquire gradually certain amount of what you might call human knowledge or knowledge of human people or if I am a psychiatrist or psychologist or a studier of mankind or an anthropologist or whatever it may be, I will gather a great deal of data about other people and judging them then either by what they tell me or the way I look at them and judging their behavior and seeing certain characteristics I probably can come to a certain quantity of knowledge in which I then feel I could do something right or setting it right or perhaps make a little bit of order out of the chaotic conditions. It is quite possible of course, and then it is a question of finding that people who are less developed than I am and for which I then should have a certain form of self confidence and perhaps also a willingness, that I am willing to part with certain information that has cost me a great deal and has become my own experience, you see it is still the other side of the coin. If I feel that I have reached a certain height maybe I'm proud of it and maybe it gives me an advantage and maybe because of that people will look up to me.

Now if I go and communicate that to others they will become the same kind of a thing as I am and my value in my own estimation will be lowered.

Q: I don't understand that.

A: It's a very simple thing. If I have ten thousand dollars that I earned with the sweat of my brow and I tell everybody how to earn ten thousand dollars, my ten thousand dollars becomes less and less the more people earn also ten thousand dollars. Psychologically it is exactly the same.

Q: Well, if we use a term like inferior and if I feel I am inferior to someone else and maybe I'm not inferior, maybe it has a different element or a different quality, perhaps I meet someone who is inferior to me but he is more humble than me so I say because of my thing this man is inferior to me when in actuality he is humble, how am I to recognize someone in the condition that I am in and the state and level that I'm at someone who is inferior how am I to say this person is inferior to me.

A: The question of inferiortiy only has a relation to any one particular point. That is let's say inferiority can be applied when I happen to have knowledge which you don't have and on the basis of wanting that knowledge you ask me, then I have superiority because I can communicate something to you if you haven't got this yet. But it is a very small phase of a person. If you take now more than that particular or perhaps in extreme cases of certain things I happen to know you don't and there are several I know and you don't but there are some that I don't and you know unless we now talk about the same kind of a thing one never can talk about superiority or inferiority Because I don't

know the relative values of humility as against knowledge or wisdom. You see, so you cannot introduce it, you can only use it in a case when there is a very definite exchange of one thing on one level in which you start to compare. In a general way whenever one considers a man and whatever his development may be it is very difficult to say that one is better than the other unless one can agree on certain things that are mutually understood and for whom there is a certain value in each person that is expressed in the same kind of a terminology but that is a very difficult thing because whatever I value may be conditioned by the way I have lived and it may also be conditioned by the people I know who have the same kind of thing and also how much it has cost me to acquire it. So you see these three factors are of course quite different for each person and there is very little chance even to agree on it when you meet someone you don't know very much. When you do know them very well and maybe they are friends and you've lived with them a long time but of course many of these things need not even be formulated because you already know them, you feel them sometimes, but you see we were not talking about that particular thing. It is a question simply of how can one communicate to others and it depends of course partly on the desire of one man wishing to communicate, the other wishing to be open to receive. So there is no question of relativity of what is better or worse. If one has an aim in mind a certain skill may be required for that particular aim. So if a person does have that skill it is no good even to teach him that when he has no desire to acquire the skill. Now if the skill is limited

skill is limited to the possibility of a spiritual development you of course limit already many people who are never want to be interested and never want to pay anything for becoming a little bit more spiritual than they are. And in general whenever one has reached a certain level in ordinary life which is so called quite acceptable and which people admire and which in ordinary life is judged by certain standards of perhaps love or a name or to some extent feeling their self-love that then it is very difficult to talk to them about anything that has to do either with a spiritual existence on earth or even with extra-sensory perceptions in the hereafter or heaven or God or His Endlessness. So one visits oneself if you want to talk about that possible development in that kind of a direction and I think there are very few relatively speaking. It may take a long time before you even find it. Does that answer?

Q: Yes, thank you.

Q: Mr. Nyland, I came across a statement in Kenneth Walker's book which said in the initial stages of Work you develop personality at the expense of essence, now I don't understand that because if that's true, if I can trust that statement, would you explain a little

A: Now the question is what you develop now or what you consider personality, it's not in an objective sense. You see, when he talks about ordinary life and I think he does, I don't think he talks about the possibility of consciousness because if this question of conscious life quite definitely personality disappears and in its place would come something again calling by different name that is an individuality. Now if you take a man

as he lives on earth and as he develops certain skills then his manifestation has to be naturally many times on the periphery because that is where he is ( ) by his sense organs but then perhaps he has not much time to develop anything that is essential in him and if he has the time for it sometimes he doesn't know how to develop it because if there is a possibility for man to live on earth and the accent of living on earth is to make a living and to go to school and to have education in order to get along very well with the rest of the world or to be liked or to make a name or money or whatever it may be that then in that particular world in which many pepple of course have to live there is very little chance or time or desire to develop something else. It is quite easy you know to talk to a poor man that you ought to go to the library and you ought to study a little bit about Schoepenhauer and it will help you a great deal and the poor guy is working 10 hours a day in order to keep his family going and at the end of the day he is tired and moreover he would have to spend an extra 15 or 20 cents on the subway to go to the library and take it away from his wife and children and all that kind of a nonsense. It is beautiful to say ah, you ought to go to the country, you are sick, look at your face it is all pale and so forth, how can a man do it? Day after day he has to work and if he misses out par icularly as I say if he is a little poor and he has to work because he lives from week to week and it is so easy to tell him that he ought to do something else and who will pay for that, who will pay the doctor, he ought to have treatment, who can afford it, to go to a psychiatrist. Well if that is true on one level and we know it a little bit because it is subject

to more extremes, that it is exactly the same thing when people are so called of an equal development. Itôs like you talk together that you ought to do this, oh, I wouldn't do that, I would not steal, or no, why don't you spend your time a little this way and that, what do we know about other people, who can even judge someone else for doing whatever he does what do we know about the motivations that stay within one and that the manifestation becomes a result of such kind of considering which people consider much to private to even talk about. So when I say this question of personality, if I don't have time for the development of that which is essence naturally that which is originally essence in me becomes atrophied because it doesn't get any food and gradually it is reduced and you can say, yes, it is at the expense of the development of personality. Now perhaps personality as I need it and as I want to live in life will not allow me, partly because of time, partly because of lack of interest, partly because of not being exposed to the possibilites of developing that then logically I end up by being you might call it a superficial person having a personality and perhaps quite all right being able to get along in the world. But if you say how far does my life actually go is that what you are skin deep, or if I prick it do I draw really essential blood? I think it is just a little saying on the part of Walker to indicate that man is not suficiently harmonious developed and that in ordinary life there is very little chance for it and that even what he originally starts out with as being essentially something that is a little bit more real and perhaps when a person is young he has that

essential quality a little bit more than an adult that even there conditions in life are such that the one has to be sacrificed to the expense of the other. From a standpoint of consciousness there is a different kind of a question, if personality is that what is the appearance of man on earth and if that is what he develops in order to get along in life and to fulfill his ordinary functions as a human being, his personality of course remains constantly what ~~are~~ is his equipment intellectually, emotionally and physically and that represents then his personality as it is and as from the standpoint of consciousness in an unconscious state. That is that kind of a personality which walks around on earth is from the standpoint of Gurdjieff to use that terminology half-asleep, or at least he is waking-sleep. Now if when he wakes-up what will happen to himself, to his functions, if the understanding is that man is incomplete and if ~~by~~ means of certain ways of working on himself he can develop certain things which are now potential in him, and then in that direction of development towards more consciousness he also develops that which is now potential and very small and particularly ~~his~~ feeling center and his intellectual center as a mental activity. Then of course that what is growing out into something else very often will grow out by the usage of that what already exists and that the ultimate aim for man would be to change from a personality which is unconscious in our ordinary sense now, to an individuality which happens to be composed of the possibility of a combination of three very definite developed, I would call them, bodies of man as represented by his physical, his emotional, his mental or soul body.

If that is true and if that is true as a possible picture that one can assume because it will give for oneself a certain satisfaction, it being logical and quite definitely a little bit arguable but more or less adceptable, that then if that is the aim it is quite logical that when the personality will have to be used for the formation of an individual that an individuality will gradually take over the different functions of the personality and that many times the personality will have to dissappear in the first place because that that it has acquired in an unconscious state may not be useful for a conscious state, and in the second place if that what is personality and that is all he has, has to be used as food for the feeding of something new on the conscious state which we then call individual. Now if this particular change can take place gradually, that is if there is a difference between personality and an individual as there might be a change between different rates of vibrations one can assume that then a being of a lower vibration is under the influence of certain things that will affect it that gradually such a rate of vibrations of the personality can change over into different rate of vibrations of an individual, very much as if I have a note on the string of a violin and I have my finger below and I strike at that one string and I move now my hand up it changes from a bass note to a treble. Well, it may be that same kind of a problem that the relationship between a personality and an individuality could be expressed as a different rate of vibrations, different rates of density, and the different forms of behavior because the properties of either personality or an individual are different. Whatever it may be it doesn't matter

because an aim is ultimately to acquire an individuality and I would be very grateful to sacrafice whatever it is of a personality if for me in my estimation individuality is of more value. Don't pay too much attention to some of those statements, they don't mean very much and unless one really goes over that as an author, goes over the different statements one has made and then tries to elucidate them from different angles and actually gives time to think of what might be the reaction of such statement on different kinds of persons. But it is not that kind of a book and Walker was not that kind of a person. Walker was, I would say, a very good talker, and he wanted to produce many things and he wrote very many quite nice, good books. But you see if they are accurate like a scientific treatise has to be accurate without any mistake that is another question. Many times certain statements are made quite glibly, sometimes without knowing it because sometimes it sounds good and if you actually start to look at it and study it if you are honest you will say I'm sorry I've made a statement.

Q: Could you perhaps talk a little bit about the difference between, oh say, the search for enlightenment and a search for objectivity, and a state of being awake versus a state of satori and things of this sort, since my friend is going to Japan this might be very interesting to him.

A: When he goes to Japan he'll be exposed to Zen, and it is still a question, can any Westener ever understand Zen. I think we play around with it very much like we play around with any kind of an oriental religion. I think we try to understand as much as we possibly can about Buddhism, or Vedanta or as I've

said many times the Bhagavad-Gita and Mahabharata or books like ( ) or sacred sayings of the East and it is very difficult for us with our particular complexes which are quite definitely Western in concept to adapt ourselves to those things which are inherently different to their nature as they represent a different kind man, in a different place of the earth. Now I think that a great deal of their concept ( ) partly proven for themselves in their daily life is quite different from what we are used to. If you were brought up, like sometimes a little bit more primitive people are brought up, or sometimes you can see in the Near East where one is in realtionship to each other or particularly when one is brought up in villages where life is still fairly simple and where there is authority of parents and there is still recognition of that which is religious even if man may not be as good a man as he ought to be but at least he has a certain standing. Whenever one reads about that even if you compare, sometime ago I mentioned the American Indian, now that what actually is still there and is maintained and it is maintained as a culture about which we know very little because for them even we are strangers, and how long does it take, although there have been cases where some Western man has finally adapted and adopted into and even allowed to go down to the kiva and take part in such ceremonies. How little do we know when we see their dance and how little do we know what goes on in them. It is not only true of American Indians, it is true of any kind of a culture and the culture for us, as far as the Indians are concerned is such a tremendous difference if one goes further into Peruivian culture, of Maya culture that what has existed

before, what do we know of the life of ( ), and if we go to the Near East, what do we know about Sufi, what do we know about Mohammadenism, what do we know about Zoraster, what do we know about old Egyptology, very little, and if you go to the Hindus and you come there and you live among them, what does a Mohammanden really think, what does a man who has been brought up on Sanskrit, what does he know or think in his family and there are books about them and we see how different it is at that time. Now in this particular concept you place certain ideas which sometimes can be understood philosophically, like the idea of Zen or perhaps Nirvana or Samadha or whatever it may be that I desire as a person finding myself in a certain tremultuous state, with the chaotic thinking and feeling not being able to place it and then saying if only I could be at peace so that everything that is now disturbing me will not disturb me then I am not looking or even defining that what I could experience and only in the terminology of negating that what I now experience and wishing to be away or not to be there. And I think this is the way we approach any kind of a culture from the outside because it is just impossible for us to start from early life living in it and then after quite some time and the time of maturity, at a time of real desire to try to understand it we probably can come to some kind of an understanding of what goes on in the psyche of such people but to be able to say I ( ) or I am a Hindu or I think the same way as they do, I think it is a little strange statement to make. Now what everyone knows or rather if one takes the word of people like ( ) and who could know or at least who have tried

honestly, now always such people who have been honest in the relation to trying to understand a culture that was not their own. There are very few but there have been. So in the first place if I would like to find out something about Vedanta I wanted to find out someone, I wanted to try to uncover someone who is still true Vedanta. Now I take that simple as an example but it can be applied to any kind of a culture that has reached us and about which we know something. But as in itself what do we know? That what has been made Westernized for us by Swami ( ) You see, do I know that they are using terminology that really belongs to them or are they trying to put it into this kind of a form. I think in a general way if we believe Suzuki on Zen, I would surely prefer him instead of Alan Watts. Yah, but again there is a good intention and many times from their standpoint they will start to judge and to interpret it dependent on the condition in which they are. And many times we simply assume that it is so when it may not be so at all. I mentioned once and for me it serves as an example because it can be repeated thousands of times. I was in Bali and happened to be with an Archeologist visiting a little temple and there was another man who wanted to take some photographs, the priests objected to it and didn't want to have them brought out in the open because it was too dark inside. Well as we were walking around the a little and there was some kind of an altar and some deities and some sculpture and I happened to be in the back of that and there in the dark was a head and it had no face and it had only an eye, but the eye was in the back of the head, it was interesting because in talking with the Archeologist who knew every-

thing, he was looking at this thing, oh, he said, they made a mistake. Well, it helped me to know a little bit about 'I', it was a different kind of a thing for me. Of course I didn't tell him but if this, say, this particular little story was used by the Archeologist in a book it would be repeated by every person who reads it and how much knowledge is even in the Encyclopedia Brittanica that is worthwhile. You see, we know that and scientific liturature we copy and we simply take certain statements because they happen to be made by someone who has a name and then assume he ought to know and there is no further question, mistake after mistake simply keeps on going through different editions. Well, it starts that way and I say it can be understood because it is extremely difficult to enter into a religion that is not your own and particularly when the religion when you meet it you have gone already through certain forms of your own religion and to some extent one has crystallized in that kind of a thought. So when one says what is Vedanta, what is Zen, what is real Buddhism, what is the life that ought to be understood as a beggar among the dead, what are the conditions in India, in Calcutta, in the Punjabi, in Carachi, Bombay; how do they live, what are they when they so-called worship, what is it for them, how can I know ( ) in order to imbibe enough of that kind of an idea or tp life in that atmosphere even if I were sufficiently suceptible. What is there that I can say if I see all the temples in Bangkok with the beautiful bells ringing in the wind along the side, what does it mean to me, and what does it mean to someone else. If I see dances and

don't even have to go to Bali or to Jophur but if you look at the dances at the ordinary temples, sacred temple dances of the Sufis and of the different people in the Near East, what does it mean to them and what is it to me and how can I ever interpret it? So our knowledge must remain quite superficial and I think that the only way to find out, if possible, is to merge with such people, really to try to see if I could mix, try to understand whatever they say from their standpoint and to make them say and make truthful statements. Because many times when there is a stranger and there is a certain danger that that what is now my own as culture is private with me, of course I protect it. So when someone asks me I never tell the truth. You see it would take a long time in Japan, particularly the Japanese are known that they can keep a secret, but how close one can get to it, it will be very interesting. What the ultimate meaning can be and to what extent it can be adapted for oneself, to what extent it can be useful in one's life, to what extent someone could become a Zen master, all the different things that are perhaps necessary for that I think it is practically impossible for anyone who has already gone through a certain number of formalities to be sufficiently flexible, to do as if nothing has happened and to start from scratch, very, very difficult. But interesting just the same and the attitude should alwasy be, I don't know, please tell me. But the attitude many times of Americans is, I'll tell you.

Q: I was thinking of this man you know who left New York and went to Japan and wrote this book, Three Pillars of Zen,

A: Maybe it is not enough.

A: It depends how deep you want to go, depends on what you come in contact with. I think for a real student there is more than enough material if you want to dig but it takes time. And then if one actually has that kind of knowledge that is if it is available to him, it is still a question do I understand it. You see, it is a question of being able to be open enough to it so that it can penetrate and that is the difficulty that even with the best intentions I may not be porous enough. And there may be in me prejudices of a certain kind, immediately using terminology with which I am familiar, like with the man with the eye in the back of the head, oh, that's a mistake. You see it is so logical to think that because we are used to have two here (eyes in front, pointing), perhaps a third eye in the forehead, maybe, but you see, never in the back. So when it is something completely like a new world one is always apt to be a little prejudice. The reason I say that the more open one can be then if one wants to enter into that atmosphere then it is a question of language. Not only concepts, concepts sometimes one can feel but a question of communication as a language, a different kind of a language and particularly Japanese, what does one know in order to become familiar with that and they, and with the translation of it, and how long does it take to establish that kind of a confidence, that kind of trust, a long time. If you take a man like Cushing with the Juni, how long did it take him? finally he became a priest but there are so few. At the same time if one goes out and visits many different countries and comes in contact with many different people, different types, it will

help of course to see that we are even in a big country like this, provincial, and it cannot be helped because we have to be limited because we happen to be physically limited to a certain place. And the more that you can travel and see or whatever it happens to be that you may be exposed to the more there is the possibility of taking certain things in and if one is open enough and willing enough in remaining more and more open not withstanding the amount of data you might gather constantly having this kind of a desire to see if perhaps you don't know and to open to the possibility of all the time receiving something that is like new, like new for a little child. I think if that attitude is there one can go much a much further than a state of oh yes I know it you won't be able to tell me anything, now I will tell you something we do like this in America, etc., etc., it is so stupid.

Q: I wonder if I might ask a question in relationship to what you were talking about in terms of understanding religions of other cultures, I wonder if there isn't some kind of a basic human experience, sort of based on the equipment that we come into the world with and the essential problems that everyone really has to face maybe to a greater or lesser degree ( )

A: In order to understand what you mean ( ) but the question is always how much is our own knowledge regarding the totality of mankind. You see it is quite true, if a human being as a type can be discerned from that what we are and my knowledge of the different people that I have come in contact with of course is limited and the others are just as much human being

The savages or the aboriginies of Australia or New Guinea certainly are human beings who live and have been born in this world and who also have an idea about the sters and the heavens and about thunderstorms and so forth and express it in a certain way. Now of course they have religions like everyone from the olden ages always has had religions in whatever it is and defining it in certain ways and naturally build up around it certain kinds of culture, sometimes the culture was a result of a religion, sometimes the religion was a result of a culture. But in any event if I make a statement and said yes, is there something that is the same in each religion, it is a very cheap way of saying it. Because really I don't know that is if religion is a meaning of that what is a spiritual development in oneself as expressed in a mode of living. Because if you don't want to limit it to that or rather if that is not the kind of a definition you can go off into all kind of other description of whatever you understand by religion in the form of defining in certain terminology what is meant by God or angels or that what is the firmament or heaven and the golden streets. You know it is then a question of dogma, it is a question of intellectualizing, it is a question sometimes of becoming emotionally involved without being able to use words. But you see for me that is not religion, for me that is an historical description of certain conditions of thought or of feeling of certain people and sometimes to the extent that they are a little bit further developed than only their physical body and they might call it in an art form or in a religious form a develop-

ment of their feeling. And sometimes we may call it industrial development, scientific development as far as their brain is concerned, philosophical development as far as seeing the relationship between certain concepts and the value of such a concept in connection with another. But you see, then it is not a question of religion as we know it now in the form of Christianity or Mohammadanism but it is then something that I call more or less in religious terms and that more or less covers an idea of a person who believes that there is a being higher than he is and that he hopes that ultimately he, when he dies or perhaps during his life time, he might have a chance either to be united with that or at least will reach a certain understanding so that he will be able to feel more at home. But now if you take that kind of a religion and you take the different people who profess to be religious in that sense it does not express itself in the same way at all. Much of the religion of the peoples who are surely human beings and they live under condtions that we don't know, we say thank God they are so this and that and we are so well civilized and industrially developed and all this kind of thing we have, we fortunately don't have fear anymore. The question if an aboriginie or someone in Java who is just a simple kind of a person but who still believes that in the thunders and the volcanoes there is something there that speaks to him and when nature talks like that it has a meaning for him in his life, what do we know, what can we know about it and nevertheless they are without any question religious. Now if you want to bring it

down to very simple terms, that is, if man as born on earth can have certain ambitions, inspirations, aspirations towards the possibility of a further development then it first has to be settled that on earth what kind of development can he reach and if that development is in the direction of a religious feeling what can he reach at the present time with that what he is gifted with, that what could develop in him as his emotional center and whatever could form or be used as an expression of that kind of a religious feeling, perhaps in forms of art, or in forms of behavior or in forms of kindness or in forms of adoration or in forms of becoming really, let's say, living in humility, or the acknowledgement of that what is as a higher, superior being for him a guide, or a signpost or a cloud that lights up during the darkness. All of these kind of things of course do apply when a man is considered as man on earth with the possibility of further development. One starts to differ if it is possibly to have heaven on earth or if one has to wait until one dies, one starts to differ if there is actually a continuation of physcial life after death, or is there is a continuation of that what is now extra-sensory could be perceived at the present time without having as yet to notice it by means of one's sensory organs, and the question is if man actually as he is now has he within him the possibility of his own development in the direction that he could become like God, could he actually understand that what is meant, let's say with Baba when he said God is love, and love is God, that man is that way, that he could become like that by simply saying and wishing it and that it is very easy to say

follow the ten commandments and don't commit adultery, that one has to live a simple life, that one ought to become holy, that one should always be kind and not have any so-called negative emotions because they destroy, where is it that a man can say 'here I am, if I don't do this, I'm not religious, if I do, I am,' And then where is his particular vanity whenever he happens to be that way and he says but I am a Christian, and is that Christian right to be that vain about his Christianity. You see, one starts to talk then about all kind of little differences here and there and the fundamental point, the ( ) man on earth, what is his aim, what can he understand of that aim, is he and was he born blind and should he stay blind and is it better for him not to know, and is he a sheep belonging to a herd, where the purpose of the herd is that all sheep will be killed? Mutton and ( ). Is it true, does one rebel if one feels that that could become a conviction, does that belong to a religion, does it belong to a religion when I say that there is God and I want to use his name and another part of religion says don't use that name, you can't do it because you are born in sin and you have to have another kind of a name like Jesus Christ and do I understand what is meant by mediator, do I understand really what is necessary, do I make even the distinction between Jesus and Christ or why should it be Mohammedan and why can't I as a simple, religious Mohammedan sit at six o'clock in the evening and look towards Mecca and then pray and hope that then for me the next day will be better and devoted to all the different rules in the Koran and that I will not make a mistake

All these kind of little interpretations and big interpretations this kind of so-called crystallized form of religion in any way that I look at this and that and then start to compare and I say yes, Sufi talks about the same kind of a thing that I do and if I talk about being open and work on myself I remember hearing that from Mr. Casey also and is Casey actually now a student of Gurdjieff or Ouspensky and does he really understand. What is the judgement that I can have about different religions even, do I have to take someone else's word who happens to write a little bit about some kind of a little bit of part of religion or religious thought of what he has been in contact with or the kind of minister he happened to meet and that represents for him, if it is a Rabbi, Jewish religion, was it orthodox, was it not, was it according to the Zohar, what do I know about Cabala, about the five first chapters of the old testament, what do I know about Revelations, even if it is in the Bible, what particular place should I give to the apocryphal books, how much should I believe now in the Dead Sea Scrolls, is there a difference between Jesus and Christ, what is meant by grace in the Catholic faith, what is meant by atonement, what is meant by days of awe, and ( ) new people the same way towards the celebration of Ras( )? How do I from the standpoint where I am know or could even have a judgement, I think it is idiotic that in a general way one says yes, there's a God, yes we're on earth, yes we all happen to be here and we will die, yes I know we are under the influence of this, that and the other, and that all of us are such and such by nature and then I invent a beautiful word and say that Great Nature

I have to find out what it is and then I say yes if I use objectivity as against subjectivity and do I know what I mean by it when I cannot even define what objectivity is, all I can say is it is non-subjective, and do I know my subjectivity and to what extent am I bound, to what extent I am free at certain times, to what extent is there when I pray that the totality of me is engaged in such prayer, when whenever I start with the first sentence some thought all of a sudden happens to come because I hear the voice of my little child who is crying, you think my prayer is good? Don't lets talk too much about the different kinds of religions, it always is interesting of course it is interesting, like as I said before an anthropologist who studies cultures it is interesting for many, many people to start to compare, and look at the nonsense that they write and that they publish in books and you try to read them and you don't even know what they're talking about and you get an idea that they themselves don't know what they are writing. Religion for oneself is extremely simple, there is something in one that says this what is on earth and this what is my body, and this what I use as manifestation and what is now for me sense organs and that what I call my feeling is if I wish to say it, it is limited because there is more of a desire to want to express than I can express, and then I know I do not know the words and I don't even know the direction and still there is in me such desire that I wish to grow and I wish to understand and I say yes for that reason I wish to reach God, I wish really to understand what I am and when I say that I love you that I mean it and that I could maintain it for the rest of my

life. Of course, that one knows and I say spiritually simply to contrast a little bit with the physical appearence and because spiritual ( ) one understands it as something that is a little lighter and that might indicate that if this kind of a lightness and that kind of a change of density there may be a possibility of being lifted away from earth if I look at the earth as something that binds me. Religion is then to try to find that kind of a freedom and quite logically that in that freedom I have to admit there is something towards which I go which is of a higher kind of a nature even if I don't understand it and for the time being whatever I am, trying to explain it for myself I try to personify that which is higher than I am because I need at the present time still certain forms in order to understand what is the content that later maybe I could do without form, maybe later I can see spiritually as existing by itself without having any kind of a manifestation and maybe it is possible that then I would understand what is meant by his Endlessness when I understand now nothing else and everything has an end how can I even conceive of the idea of something that is endless. Of course there are things in ones life that one starts to compare, one says, yes, there is a moment that I never will forget, there are certain experiences that I do remember so vividly at certain times that I was as if taken up to heaven, as if certain things happened to me as if I didn't exist but still I know I exist and it is then sometimes that I heard something out of this world, it is as if something started to descend and found me and I responded then in the depth of my heart I said yes, here I am. Of course

such things exist and one says yes, that is my religion, that is my way of life and it compares perhaps a little bit with what the mystic feels when he is in communication or in communion with his God, and it is quite possible that there are times when I have a feeling that is towards people and I love them, that the times might even extend that I say at this moment I could love the whole world because there is within myself something that is so beautiful and so tremendously valuable that it cannot be compared to anything whatsoever and no one in the whole world can hurt me. Maybe it is true, maybe that is religion, how do I know again and again what it is for someone else when I for myself sometimes don't even know how to formulate or how to express it and how to come to terms with it because it is foreign to me, that is not something that comes easy it is something that has to come accidentally and then I wish from that time on having that kind of a thirst for the possibility, knowing that it has existed, that that kind of a religion could perhaps become for me a material form for the time being and gradually change over into a more spiritual concept. Of course one loves to think about it, one loves to connect this and that and say oh yes I know that's exactly like Nietzche, that is exactly what he means and Zoroaster, yes, and Zarathustra, fine, also good, but then if you only knew works, ( )and what he means by elan vital, that is really it and I go from one to the other, Schoepenhauer and the rest and I follow Spinoza because that is nature and I worship Pantheism and then all of a sudden I discover that maybe

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in the old Toltec Indian civilisation there was something of a God that everybody acknowledged as existing without knowing where it came from, without knowing that it existed and for which each person at times felt as if they were in the presence of something that would destroy them. But if one wants to call it by little bits of different names it is quite all right and sometimes I would almost say quite amusing, but what good does it do me tomorrow, all the treasures of the world, all the different formulations of the words that are in Webster, or in an encyclopaedia and they are at my disposal and I have such memory that even in my sleep I can say it is on page 999 and what good is it to me tomorrow morning when someone steps on my toes? That is religion, that at that time my Christ would say I turn the other cheek, that at that time I have that kind of control I almost would say thankyou for giving me the chance to wake-up. If that exists one is religious, and never mind how it is called. So children this is the end, let's not talk any more. This is the purpose of one's life when you see it you work for it, you remain interested in a variety of things because you live on earth you cannot do without, you have to use your personality for whatever purpose you wish and whatever your aim happens to be, it may be close to the ground, it may be close to the surface of the earth, maybe sometimes you would like to fly away a little bit, sometimes it could become a little bit more spiritual, sometimes you would say, yes I want to go up to heaven now, don't go yet until you are sure that you have settled all the debts of earth, after that you can leave, you can go

you can do whatever you like but you have, each one of us has a responsibility on earth, that's the reason we were born here even if you don't understand it, nevertheless you find yourself by being here, what is the meaning of being here, why. You can read all kind of little things about it, you know, pamphlets and different people with best intentions writing and be good and think good and thank God, and so forth, and forth. What is you, what is your own, what are you, what are you made of, what is in you, what is still possible of development, not your body any more, it is finished, your feeling if it is not atrophied it has a chance, your mind, without any question your mind could be quite different and free from associations and still what is the extreme difficulty in that particular direction, because this might be used in order to keep alive on earth. So if you want to think about that and have questions about that kind of part of your life, not primarily your personality but that what really makes you tick as really what concerns you, what really makes you what you are and really on that basis what makes you feel that there is a possibility of becoming a man. If you want that someday you will become God.